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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 002545

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KNNP](#) [IR](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: ISRAELI SUPPORT FOR U.S. POSTURE ON IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM

REF: STATE 120288

Classified By: DCM Luis Moreno, reasons 1.4 (b),(d)

¶1. (C) Summary: The GOI appreciated reftel message regarding the U.S. posture on Iran's nuclear program. According to MFA Director for Nonproliferation Haim Waxman, the GOI remains interested in next steps, including in the immediate time period U.S. plans for the IAEA November 26 Board of Governors meeting. He said the GOI intends to push for a resolution halting construction of the Qom facility during the meeting. Overall, Waxman stressed the importance of enhancing contacts within the international community so that "crippling sanctions" could be introduced by the end of the year should engagement efforts fail. He also said President Ahmadinejad's recent trip to Brazil undermined engagement efforts, and expressed interest in further cooperation in UN sanctions committees regarding the GOI interdiction of the M/V Francop. Waxman discussed these issues with polmiloff on November 24. End Summary.

¶2. (C) On November 24, polmiloff discussed -- but did not leave a copy of -- reftel points with Waxman, who characterized them as "strong and well written." He acknowledged that the points were more likely intended for other IAEA member states, as deploying these points upon the GOI would be "preaching to the converted." Nevertheless, he appreciated the opportunity to see how the United States was "building the case" against Iran, one that the GOI believes is quite compelling.

¶3. (C) In terms of specific feedback, Waxman noted that the points in response to the hypothetical question regarding an Iranian announcement that it had "no choice" but to make its own fuel for the Tehran Research Reactor (TRR) by and large avoided the question -- how would the P5 1 respond, he asked. Further, he said the response to the question regarding the Qom facility as an emergency back-up facility in the event of an Israeli or U.S. strike upon the Iranian nuclear program was not strong enough. Waxman argued that it was not reasonable to accept that the Qom facility is suitable for civilian purposes, given the fact that it would take 30 years for the facility to produce a year's supply of fuel. In that case, he said, we have to question what exactly the Qom facility would be backing up.

¶4. (C) Waxman keyed on the point under next steps promising further consultations prior to the November 26 IAEA Board of Governors (BOG) meeting, and asked what the United States hoped to achieve during the meeting. He said the GOI at the very least intended to push at the BOG meeting for a resolution to end construction at the Qom facility. Waxman highlighted Israeli concerns that the facility might somehow be legitimized in the realm of public opinion, and stressed the importance of ensuring that no centrifuges be introduced at the facility.

¶5. (C) In reference to the TRR, Waxman said the GOI had been following the proposal very closely. He agreed with reftel

points that the TRR deal would amount to a sort of confidence building measure -- it in no way could be viewed as a resolution, he said, but perhaps as a positive first step toward further negotiations. However, Waxman said the GOI was in no way surprised by the "typical" Iranian response.

¶6. (C) Overall, Waxman stressed that a "dual track" involving engagement and pressure means exactly that -- both engagement and pressure. He said that the United States has made efforts in "good faith" over the last few months to solicit a response from Tehran -- but thus far to no avail. Waxman reiterated that "time was running out," and stressed the need to enhance contacts in the international community so that "crippling sanctions" can be implemented by the end of the year. He acknowledged an "improved" environment in Europe in terms of enhancing sanctions, but suggested some Europeans still require a "clear U.S. signal." Waxman said it was not clear if Russia and China would join any effort to strengthen sanctions -- in that case, it is imperative that "like-minded states" create the most stringent sanctions possible.

¶7. (C) Waxman also commented on Iranian President Ahmadinejad's recent visit to Brazil. He noted a "disconnect" -- if engagement is to work as a strategy, then visits such as this in which Ahmadinejad is "welcomed with open arms" send the wrong signal. He said the GOI has deployed talking points world-wide stressing this visit in particular as undermining the engagement strategy.

¶8. (C) On a somewhat related note, Waxman said the GOI is interested in working further with the United States in UN sanctions committees regarding the GOI interdiction of the

TEL AVIV 00002545 002 OF 002

M/V Francop. He said the Israeli Embassy in Washington will receive further instructions on GOI thinking along these lines.

CUNNINGHAM